



NEWS FROM HOINA HOMES OF THE INDIAN NATION

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Hearts Entwined: Love Lasts Forever

By Deepa Ramasamy

Guest from Schreyer Honors College

July 31, 2009: Day 1

As I stepped out of the airport, the hot, arid climate of Andhra Pradesh was finally becoming a reality. Mom was waiting outside to greet us, and we piled into the bus with our luggage. After eating lunch and running errands, we embarked on an hour long bus ride from the inner city of Visakhapatnam to where the homes were located. During our ride, we were caught in a torrential rain storm, where high streams of muddy water caught many families underneath thatched roofs of small shops. When we drove for what seemed like ages, we finally saw a sign for HOINA and after turning the corner, we found ourselves amidst many acres of beautiful green grass, trees, cows, monkeys and mosaic tile designs accentuating the orphanages. Having been to many poor places in India prior to this trip, I was amazed at the beauty of the homes as soon as I saw it.

After we became situated in the guest house, all of us wanted to meet some of the children before we headed to bed after such an exhausting day. When we walked up to the gate, the three oldest girls were standing there to greet us and immediately they asked me, "Do you speak Tamil?" I replied yes, and right away they started speaking to me as if we had known each other for years. As we met all of the other girls, they were all so well behaved and sang for us without an ounce of shyness. Seeing all of their bright, shining faces made the long trip completely worth it. The



Penn State student, Deepa Ramasamy, swinging with new HOINA child, Manasa, after school.

older girls held my hands with such affection. "You will be like our very own sisters by the end of this trip," they said. Their words stuck with me, and even though I had

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known them for only two hours, they felt like sisters already. I fell asleep that night with a sense of belonging and excitement for my time at HOINA. I already knew it would be a time in my life that I would never forget ...

Day 18

It felt like we had just arrived at HOINA, and tomorrow we would be leaving.

The memories over the past weeks came flooding back to me. Mosaic tiling, cutting an endless supply of vegetables for meals, English lessons, cricket matches, getting stuck in city traffic for hours, talent shows. The list goes on. That night we added one more memory for the trip: Henna night. The older girls stayed up and put it on for us, and as the last part of the design was finally being placed on my lower right forearm, I looked to see 2 hearts intertwined. "No matter where we are in this world, our hearts will always be together," they said to me. Finally coming to the realization that we were leaving the next day, I sadly looked at them and, holding back tears, smiled and nodded my head in return.

Last Day

The next morning we woke up bright and early (around five am) to help the girls get ready for school. The



Penn State girls show the designs on their hands after henna night.

usual excitement was lacking that morning, and seeing the girl's sad faces, we tried to stay cheerful to brighten up their moods. Many of them came up to me giving small cards they had made: "We love you Deepa sister. We will never forget you, so please never forget us." I could not believe we were leaving. We watched all of the kids magically fit into that small school bus one

last time. I was happily waving until I looked into the bus and caught the eye of one particular girl. She was one of the few girls that didn't speak Tamil, but even though I could only speak to her through broken English, we would hug every day, and that was worth more than any words we could have ever said to each other. She was staring straight ahead blankly with tears rolling down her face. As I uncontrollably started crying, so did the others. As the bus left, we waved and watched as their tiny hands were finally out of sight. At that moment, I realized I had become a part of a family—a family who cares for everyone, and always acts selflessly. The children and staff there taught me how to have faith and how to love, and I feel so blessed and thankful to have met each and every one of them. My time spent at HOINA was in a sense both transient and permanent; pictures may fade, and memories may be forgotten, but the love shared between brothers and sisters is a love that will last forever. ♻️

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Account Number (on your mailing label): _____

Mail coupon to: **HOINA**
PO Box 636
Brownstown, PA 17508-0636



FEB/2010



I want to sponsor a HOINA boy / girl (circle one).
Here is my first monthly gift of \$30.

This gift of \$ _____ is in honor of
(please give name and address of person): _____

(please print clearly)

Use this gift to finance HOINA's ongoing projects
through the General Fund.

ALL DONATIONS ARE TAX-DEDUCTIBLE

Remembrances

Thank you to the many donors who choose to give memorial and honorary gifts. When requesting a gift to be listed in someone's memory or honor, please include the name and address of the individual or family so we can send them an acknowledgment.

In Honor of

Ruth Adams
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Irene and Richard Remer
Jonathan, Brianna, Jessica, Nora,
Elijah, Hana, Naomi – Great-
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Annual Giving Statements

You should have received your annual giving statement from our HOINA office in Brownstown, PA, by now. If yours has not arrived or if you spot an error, please alert Amy in our office at 1.877.994.6462 (toll-free) or 717.355.9494 immediately so she can make the necessary adjustments. Thank you for your generous support of our work. We couldn't do it without you! 

HOINA is a 501(c)3, tax-exempt organization with international headquarters located at:

HOINA
PO Box 87
Saint Charles, MO 63302-0087
U.S.A.
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This newsletter is published to inform our readers of the work HOINA does among the handicapped and abandoned in India.

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HOINA
 PO Box 636
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Your Help Gives Hope

Lenka Vijaya Lakshmi's parents were married in 1987. Their first daughter was born in 1988, and the couple's second daughter, Vijaya Lakshmi, was born in 2004. Her father died of a heart attack in 2007, and it was not possible for her mother to support Vijaya. She was admitted to HOINA last June.

Vijaya Lakshmi is not attending school at this time. She is described by the HOINA staff as very active.

To sponsor Vijaya or another HOINA child, please complete the coupon on page three and send it to our office with your first monthly gift of \$30. You may sponsor a child in someone else's name, and we have a number of payment methods available. 



L. Vijaya Lakshmi



After a short hiatus home in Saint Charles, Missouri, Darlene is

Remember Mom in your Prayers

back in India. Her health is good, and she is looking forward to enjoying all the children on one campus without any major construction endeavors or moves. She has many visitors planning on coming this winter, so she will be busy enjoying them as well. She always appreciates letters or emails. Her newest email address is hoina@sbcglobal.net. (This may be a different address than some of you have. Please check your address books.)

Also, because of some confusion with the postal service delivering our mail to another children's home in the area, please note the address below for letter delivery. It **MUST** say "HOINA Campus."

The HOINA Campus
 Kothasunkarampalem Village
 Kothavalesa Mandal
 Vizianagaram Dt. 535183
 Andhra Pradesh
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